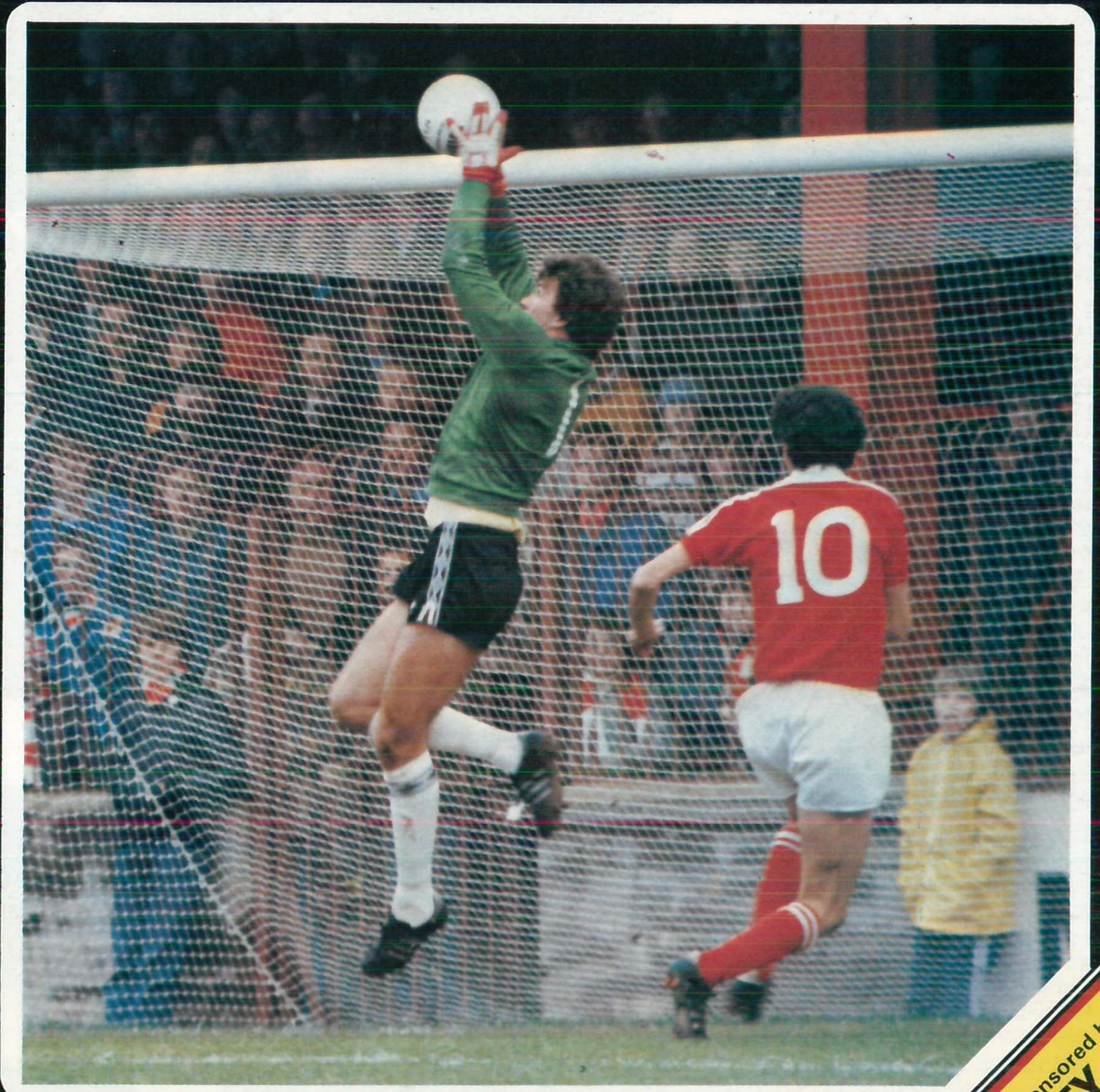


ROBIN

THE BIG MATCH COMPANION FOR CITY SUPPORTERS

30p



FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION TWO — SATURDAY 13th DECEMBER 1980

BRISTOL CITY v BOLTON WANDERERS

Today's match is sponsored by
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12

DIARY

Continuing our day-by-day look at the happenings on and off the field at Ashton Gate:

OCTOBER

30 Manager Bob Houghton reveals that he will recommend Tony Fitzpatrick to Scotland manager Jock Stein as a possible full international.

NOVEMBER

1 A bleak start to the month with a 3-1 defeat at Orient. Kevin Mabbutt scores City's goal.

2 Manager Bob Houghton flies off to Sweden to attempt to sign Lennart Larson and Teitur Thordarsson. Thordarsson will cost £75,000 and Larson £40,000.

8 City are to cut back on scouting costs as an economy measure.

A 2-0 home win over high-riding Blackburn Rovers brings a bit of cheer to Ashton Gate. Chris Garland and Trevor Tainton score their first goals of the season.

10 Peter Aitken, recently released from neighbours Bristol Rovers, starts a trial with City at Ashton Gate.

11 The worst defeat of the season as City are beaten 5-0 by West Ham United at Upton Park.

Former Plymouth Argyle manager Mike Kelly joins the Ashton Gate coaching staff. He has recently been assistant manager at Fulham. Former coach Ken Wimshurst takes over as chief scout.

14 City launch a new family season ticket scheme to attract youngsters to watch the club.



Tony Fitzpatrick scores his first goal for City during our last home game against Oldham. *Pictures: John Kelland.*



BOB'S VIEW..

We return to Ashton Gate today after another heavy away defeat, but it is a great pity more of our supporters did not see the match at Shrewsbury last Saturday. It was an incredible result. We didn't even deserve to lose, let alone by four goals.

After we had dominated almost the entire first half we conceded a goal a few minutes before half-time which meant we went in 1-0 behind which was a gross misrepresentation of what had taken place on the field in the first 45 minutes.

We then managed to get back into the game in the early stages of the second half and looked like equalising on several occasions. But then we conceded a breakaway goal that most of the lads honestly thought was offside.

When you are 2-0 down away from home it is very difficult to achieve anything. But in pushing forward in search of goals we conceded two more which culminated in a greatly unfair scoreline of 4-0.

Whilst this may sound like excuse-making and clearly football at the end of the day is about scoring goals and not conceding them, I do think we are having a spell where the ball is not running for us, to say the least.

I am sure if we keep battling as we did at Shrewsbury we will be able to change this trend and hope to still see our way clear of the relegation zone in the New Year.

Peter Aitken made his first team debut and despite the fact that he, like the rest of the boys, was desperately disappointed at being on the receiving end of what appeared on the surface to be a heavy defeat, he must have been very satisfied with his own performance.

He had an outstanding first half and did very well in the second. I am sure it will not be very long before he makes himself as popular among



Ashton Gate supporters as he was at Eastville.

This is a difficult time for everyone connected with Bristol City. Nobody enjoys spells like the club has gone through in the last 18 months.

But it is a time that, if the club is to succeed, everybody has to pull together and support the club. As I have said on many occasions since I have been here, the support the team has had at Ashton Gate has been top class.

When I first came the team had experienced six consecutive defeats, yet the support in my first two home games contributed to us being able to string together a few points that kept us in with a chance of getting out of the relegation area.

The Christmas period and January programme which gives us home games against teams in the same region of the League as us, is a vital one.

If we are going to get the points we desperately need to put us into a safer position in the near future we are going to need the wholehearted support of everyone who professes to have any interest in the club at all.

That includes not only the vociferous ones behind the goals but everyone in the enclosures and the stands. I am sure that with that support we can extricate ourselves from our present serious position.

BOB HOUGHTON

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FIESTA/CHEVETTE
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Meet JACKIE





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THE ROBIN MATCHDAY MAGAZINE
PRODUCED BY SPORTS PROJECTS
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
BRISTOL CITY
SPORTING PROMOTIONS
PRINTED BY
HEMMINGS & CAPEY
(LEICESTER) LTD

FOCUS

There has been a lot of public criticism recently about the high wages received by footballers and if the amounts we read about are true then there are indeed some very well paid young men in the game.

But perhaps on closer examination the high salaries may not seem excessive, even to those struggling through the current national recession.

For a start the top salaries go to a very few and only to those in the First Division or drawing, win a crowd bonuses in the Second.

That means these young men are at the top of their profession. And anyone at the top of his or her profession would expect to be well paid. Crowd and points bonuses are self financing. There can be no greater productivity than two points for a win and an extra 5,000 on the attendance figure.

There is another aspect of the game to be taken

into consideration. It is a short life — very few players are like Norwich City goalkeeper Kevin Keelan, and continue to play First Division soccer into their late 30s.

A player's working life is around half that of a man in any other profession or industry.

Even with wise investments a player would have to earn a great deal of money to be secure for life on the cash he earns from playing.

It is also a high risk job. Injury has ended many a promising career — like that of City's own Paul Cheeseley. A top wage earner one season can be out of the game altogether the next.

So don't begrudge the top players their money. For every superstar there are hundreds who just get by in the lower divisions.

And there are apprentices who will never make the grade and those whose careers will end as suddenly as they have begun.

bolton

Bolton Wanderers adjustment to life back in the Second Division after being relegated along with City last season has not been a particularly successful one.

Although they have had a couple of outstanding results, beating Newcastle United 4-0 and Cambridge United 6-1, they have generally found it hard to pick up points.

Away from home they have won only once in 11 League and Cup outings. Their single victory was a 2-1 success at Shrewsbury in early October.

The winner on that day was scored by Brian Kidd, signed by manager Stan Anderson in the summer from Everton for £150,000.

Brian Kidd had already won England schoolboy and youth honours when he made his senior debut for Manchester United in the Charity Shield match with Tottenham Hotspur in August 1967. Less than a year later — on his 19th birthday — he scored for Manchester United in their European Cup Final win over Benfica. He won 10 England Under-23 caps and played in two senior internationals before he eventually left Old Trafford for Arsenal in August 1974. The Gunners paid £100,000 to sign him and collected a similar fee when he moved back to Manchester with Manchester City two years later.

In March 1979, Everton paid a £150,000 fee to take him to Goodison Park. His 10 League goals this season have taken his career total to 147 and include hat-tricks against Newcastle United and Cambridge United.

The club's other signings since they left Division One have been Gerry McElhinney a £40,000 buy from the Irish club Distillery, and Yugoslavian Dusan Nikolic who cost £150,000 from Red Star Belgrade. McElhinney's recently came into the side after only one previous appearance — in the 2-0 home win over Bristol Rovers in September. Nikolic has been out of action since early October.

Goalkeeper Terry Poole took over the No. 1 jersey from Dennis Peacock following the club's 4-1 home defeat by Swansea City in September. Born in Chesterfield — like many famous goalkeepers — he played 207 League games for Huddersfield Town between 1968 and 1977. He was ever-present in the Huddersfield side which won the Division Two Championship in 1969-70. He joined Bolton in January 1977 and



PETER REID



NEIL WHATMORE

last season played seven games on loan with Sheffield United.

Full-backs Mike Graham and David Burke were apprentices together at Burnden Park. Graham made his League debut in March 1978, during the season in which Bolton won Division Two. Burke, a former England youth international, made his senior debut in a League Cup match against Chelsea in August 1978.

Since Paul Jones made his League debut at Swindon in February 1971 his name has continually been linked with top clubs and transfer deals. But no

move has ever come off and he recently played his 350th League game for the club.

Most of Mike Walsh's 150 League appearances have been made alongside Paul Jones in the Bolton defence. Walsh joined the club in July 1974 and made his League debut in February 1975 at Nottingham Forest.

The on-off move of England Under-23 player Peter Reid to Wolverhampton Wanderers finally fell through in mid-October and he played his first game of the season in the 1-1 draw with City at Burnden Park. A former Bolton apprentice, Reid made his League debut against Orient in October 1974.

Neil Whatmore needs five more League goals to take his total with Bolton, his only League club, to 100. He started his goalscoring in April 1973 when he netted twice on his debut in a 3-2 away win at Swansea. He was top scorer with 19 goals when Bolton won the Division Two title in 1977-78. In February 1978, Bolton turned down a £300,000 bid from Newcastle United to sign the striker.

Mike Carter has been with the club since his apprentice days but made his League debut on loan with Mansfield Town in March 1979. He played his first game for Bolton in a 1-1 draw with City at Burnden Park last December.

Although best known as a striker — he has scored 125 League goals — Alan Gowling has played a variety of roles for Bolton this season including appearances at centre-half and in midfield. A former England amateur international, he started his career with Manchester United making his debut in the 1967-68 season as a part-timer whilst studying for an economics degree at Manchester University. Huddersfield Town paid £65,000 to sign him in June 1972 and Newcastle United paid £70,000 for his signature in August 1975. His £120,000 move to Bolton came in March 1978. He scored in the 1976 League Cup Final when he was on the losing Newcastle side.

Scotsman David Hoggan made his League debut at Ashton Gate in April this year. He scored his first League goal in the 6-1 win over Cambridge last month and netted in two of Bolton's next three games.

Philip Wilson made his League debut against Arsenal at Highbury in February. He recently returned to the side and scored twice in the 3-0 home win over Notts County.

Former West Bromwich Albion and England Under-23 player Len Cantello has been out of the side recently. A former England schoolboy and youth international he played 301 League games for Albion before his £350,000 move to Bolton in June 1979.

PROFILE

Player profile: Tony Fitzpatrick.

Birthplace, date: Glasgow, 3rd March 1957.

Career record (League appearances, goals): St. Mirren 152 (9 goals), City 59 (1).

Car: Volkswagen.

Favourite food and drink: Steak and a glass of milk.

Pet like: Spending time with his children.

Pet hate: Losing and getting injured.

Favourite TV show and singer: Any sports programme. Paul Simon is top of his pops.

Favourite actor: Dustin Hoffman. "He is always so natural and I have enjoyed all his films."

Favourite player: Kenny Dalglish: "The complete player" and Archie Gemmill because "His 100 per cent effort is an example to all young players."

Most remembered match: When St. Mirren beat Dundee 4-0 to clinch the Scottish League Division One Championship.

Most remembered goal: For St. Mirren against Partick Thistle. "City fans might not believe it but I picked up the ball from our goalkeeper and ran the length of the field, playing a couple of one-tuos, before sticking it in at the other end."

Biggest thrill: Captaining the Scottish Under-21 team and being selected for the full Scottish international squad.

Biggest disappointment: Relegation last season. "All the players were depressed and I felt it as much as anyone."

Most difficult opponent: "They are all difficult. No one stands out in particular."

Countries played in: France, Russia, Portugal, Austria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Gibraltar.

What career if not football: Painting and decorating. He spent four years learning the trade while a part-timer with St. Mirren.

Ambition: To play for Scotland and to help City back into the First Division.

Honours: Scottish Under-21 international, Scottish League representative team, Scottish League Division One Championship with St. Mirren.

Family: Wife Elizabeth, daughter Lorraine (7), son Tony (4). They live at Portishead.



AROUND THE

BACK BY MARCH?

Geoff Merrick's first words when he realised he had broken his ankle against Oldham were: "It's sickening."

He will be out of action for another ten weeks and next week has another date in hospital when the light plaster now covering his injured right ankle will be replaced by a heavier one.

"I'm looking forward to that for it means I can get around again — even if it is only on crutches," he said. "I haven't been able to put my foot on the ground so far and it's been a bit miserable not being able to do anything."

Geoff knew straightaway that his ankle had gone when his foot crumpled beneath him as he made an interception. Physiotherapist Bill Heather realised as well but it needed X-rays in hospital to confirm the break on the outside of his ankle.

The heavy plaster will be on for another month and after that Geoff will be given a more accurate idea of when he can play again. It will all depend on how well the bone heals.

"It's reassuring that it's a clean break and that I am sure of having a good ankle again," he said. "There was talk that the bone would have to be pinned but that wasn't necessary."

Geoff dismisses the idea that he will be out for the rest of the season. "Just you wait and see — I'll be playing by March," he said confidently.

One consolation is that he will be able to celebrate Christmas at home. This will be the second year out of the last three that he has been on the injured list during the festive season.

He was out of football for almost a whole season with a worrying pelvic strain two years ago.

"Playing football on Boxing Day is part of a footballer's life and it will seem strange this year," he said. "Boxing Day games tend to be a bit special for there is a much better atmosphere and usually a much bigger crowd."

PANTOMIME DATE

Geoff's first appearance at Ashton Gate will be on Tuesday December 23rd, in the Dolman Nite Spot. He has been 'booked' by his close pal Fred Wedlock, the well-known local folk singer and entertainer, to appear in a brief pantomime.



FRED WEDLOCK — PANTOMIME

Fred Wedlock's Christmas Spectacular will also feature one or two other players, among them Gerry Sweeney.

Fred was one of the visitors Geoff received at the Bristol Royal Infirmary during his four-day stay. Former striker Joe Royle, manager Bob Houghton and assistant Roy Hodgson were among the others who popped in.

Geoff, one of the best left-foot kickers in the club, made one final comment about his injury. "At least it's only my right foot . . ." he said.

CUP SETBACK

The youth team were knocked out of the FA Youth Cup in a second round match at Portsmouth last week. Scorer in the 4-1 defeat was Garry Smith — his first goal at any level for some weeks.

WELCOME PETER

Peter Aitken took exactly two weeks to win a first team place at Ashton Gate after his free transfer from Bristol Rovers. He was chosen in midfield for last Saturday's match at Shrewsbury.

Peter, (26), a former Welsh Under-23 international and one-time skipper at Eastville, was surprisingly freed by ex-City full back Terry Cooper, the Rovers boss.

In May, when he rejected new terms, Peter was valued at £90,000. But there were no takers and Rovers decided to cut their wage bill by allowing Peter his freedom.

He has signed a two-year contract and made it clear when he moved across the city that he had not come to play reserve team football or just be an occasional first-teamer.

"I don't expect to go into the team at once," he admitted. "But I am working towards a regular place and I shall be disappointed if I haven't made it by the end of the season."

"It's a perfect move for me as I won't have to sell my house. I know all the lads and I was very impressed with the style of coaching and training during my two-week trial."

He had a few days on trial at Exeter City before the season started. Hull City, Blackburn Rovers and Cardiff City were among the clubs who showed interest in signing him when he was finally released from Eastville.

He was brought into the team at Shrewsbury in a defensive midfield role, but is equally at home in all defensive positions.

Manager Bob Houghton said after picking him: "His attitude has been excellent, he trains well and I feel he is the type of player who can roll up his sleeves and do a good job to help us improve our away record."

AT LAST!

Happiest player after the Oldham game was Tony Fitzpatrick, of course. He had waited 67 games for his first goal in English football.

"I thought I might miss the chance even then," he said afterwards "I hit the ball and it went in off the inside of the post. I've had several efforts like that since I came from Scotland and they either went wide or the ball came out."

"Perhaps that goal will change my luck. I used to get a few goals for St. Mirren but I've been disappointed at not being able to get on the scoresheet in Bristol."

Tony has improved out of all recognition under Mr. Houghton's direction. "It's the way I play now," said Tony. "In the past I had to do a lot more defending. Now the idea is for midfield players to get up quickly into the box to get into scoring positions."

THE GROUND

"This is the way I used to play in Scotland and I'm much happier playing this way. I think it brings out the best in me."

That is an understatement — according to the critics. He has earned man-of-the-match honours in several publications in the last two months.

The first time was at Bolton in the 1-1 draw. So perhaps that is a good omen for today's return match.

STARS SEARCH

The tightening of the purse strings at Ashton Gate has brought a change in the club's scouting policy. Many of the scouts based in Scotland, the North East and in other parts of the British Isles have left.

Instead the club will concentrate on Bristol and the South West in the bid to bring the best young players to Ashton Gate.

Assistant manager Roy Hodgson explained: "We are still the leading club in the South West and as such should be able to attract the top youngsters here."

"In other parts of the country the name of Bristol City does not have the same magical appeal of Liverpool, Manchester United or Arsenal so the



GERRY SWEENEY
City's new skipper

chances of getting the best players from those areas is remote.

"It is far better to concentrate our resources in the area we know best and where we are best known. There are many talented players in the West and we hope to get them.

"Then we want to coach them on the right lines and turn them into good League footballers. We are now geared for coaching. Once you've got players you must do your utmost to bring out the best in them."

City now boast the best coaching team in the club's history — and that is going to be vital for the club's future.

SKIPPER SWEENEY

Gerry Sweeney has become the club's third captain this season. Gerry Gow started off and on his transfer to Manchester City the job was handed back to Geoff Merrick. Now Geoff is out, Gerry has assumed the responsibility again. He also led the team in the matches Gerry Gow missed last season.



Tony Fitzpatrick celebrates his first goal for City.

ROBINS RECORD

LEAGUE DIVISION TWO TABLE 1980-81

	Home						Away						
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
West Ham United	21	10	0	1	27	7	3	5	2	9	9	31	
Chelsea	21	5	4	2	19	8	6	3	1	19	11	29	
Notts County	21	6	4	0	16	6	4	4	3	9	13	28	
Swansea City	20	5	2	2	16	9	3	6	2	11	9	24	
Derby County	21	4	4	2	16	14	4	4	3	14	13	24	
Sheffield Wed	21	9	1	0	19	5	1	3	7	8	20	24	
Blackburn Rovers	20	7	2	1	17	5	2	3	5	8	14	23	
Cambridge United	21	8	0	3	18	10	3	1	6	10	20	23	
Orient	21	5	3	2	17	8	3	3	5	13	17	22	
Bolton Wanderers	21	6	3	2	25	12	1	3	6	10	18	20	
Luton Town	21	4	4	2	16	12	3	2	6	10	14	20	
Grimsby Town	21	4	5	1	7	3	1	5	5	10	17	20	
Newcastle United	20	5	3	2	10	7	2	3	5	7	20	20	
Shrewsbury Town	21	5	4	2	19	11	0	5	5	3	11	19	
Wrexham	21	3	3	4	11	14	4	2	5	8	9	19	
Cardiff City	21	6	2	3	14	10	2	1	7	9	19	19	
Q.P.R.	21	5	3	2	17	6	1	3	7	10	16	18	
Preston	21	4	4	3	14	14	1	4	5	5	16	18	
Watford	20	7	2	2	17	10	0	1	8	7	17	17	
Oldham Athletic	21	4	5	2	8	4	0	3	7	5	16	16	
Bristol City	21	3	5	2	10	7	0	2	9	5	25	13	
Bristol Rovers	21	1	6	4	11	13	0	3	7	5	20	11	

Up to and including Sat. 6th December 1980

DIVISION ONE TABLE 1980-81

	Home						Away						
	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	21	8	3	0	27	9	2	6	2	17	17	29	
Aston Villa	21	7	2	1	19	6	5	3	3	17	14	29	
Ipswich Town	18	5	3	0	14	3	5	4	1	16	10	27	
Arsenal	21	7	4	0	19	8	2	4	4	13	14	26	
W.B.A.	21	6	3	2	17	7	3	5	2	11	13	26	
Manchester United	21	3	7	0	17	7	3	6	2	12	9	25	
Everton	21	5	5	0	18	8	4	1	6	16	17	24	
Nott'm Forest	21	8	0	3	26	13	1	6	3	5	9	24	
Southampton	21	7	2	2	25	15	1	3	6	10	17	21	
Birmingham City	20	5	4	2	16	10	2	3	4	11	14	21	
Stoke City	21	4	5	2	17	12	2	4	4	7	17	21	
Tottenham	20	4	4	1	19	12	3	2	6	16	21	20	
Middlesbrough	20	6	4	1	21	9	2	0	7	9	21	20	
Wolverhampton	21	7	0	3	13	8	0	5	6	8	19	19	
Manchester City	21	4	3	4	15	15	2	3	5	13	19	18	
Coventry City	21	5	3	2	16	15	2	1	8	7	18	18	
Leeds United	21	5	2	3	8	10	2	2	7	12	23	18	
Sunderland	21	4	2	4	15	13	2	3	6	12	16	17	
Norwich City	21	4	5	2	19	15	2	0	8	7	24	17	
Brighton	21	4	1	6	13	16	1	3	6	10	21	14	
Leicester City	21	3	2	5	10	11	2	0	9	7	25	12	
Crystal Palace	21	4	1	5	19	18	0	1	10	4	25	10	

Up to and including 6th December, 1980

FIRST TEAM FIXTURES 1980-81

Date	V	Opposition	F A	Att.
Aug 16	A	Preston North End	1 - 1	6,058
Aug 19	H	West Ham United	1 - 1	13,554
Aug 23	H	Bristol Rovers	0 - 0	16,937
Aug 26	A	Birmingham City (LC 2 (1L))	1 - 2	12,163
Aug 30	A	Watford	0 - 1	10,450
Sept 2	H	Birmingham City LC 2 (2L)	0 - 0	6,958
Sept 6	H	Swansea City	0 - 1	9,528
Sept 13	A	Sheffield Wednesday	1 - 2	15,054
Sept 20	H	Notts County	0 - 1	7,485
Sept 27	A	Queens Park Rangers	0 - 4	8,551
Oct 4	A	Grimsby Town	0 - 1	8,781
Oct 7	H	Luton Town	2 - 1	7,014
Oct 11	H	Newcastle United	2 - 0	10,539
Oct 18	A	Bolton Wanderers	1 - 1	8,988
Oct 21	A	Wrexham	0 - 1	4,179
Oct 25	H	Derby County	2 - 2	12,020
Nov 1	A	Orient	1 - 3	4,698
Nov 8	H	Blackburn Rovers	2 - 0	8,773
Nov 11	A	West Ham United	0 - 5	25,210
Nov 15	H	Preston North End	0 - 0	8,042
Nov 22	A	Cambridge Utd. (1)	1 - 2	4,922
Nov 29	H	Oldham Athletic	1 - 1	8,037
Dec 6	A	Shrewsbury Town	0 - 4	4,435
Dec 13	H	Bolton W. (2)		
Dec 20	A	Newcastle United		
Dec 26	H	Cardiff City		
Dec 27	A	Chelsea		
Jan 3		F.A. Cup 3		
Jan 10	H	Cambridge United		
Jan 17	H	Watford		
Jan 24		F.A. Cup 4		
Jan 31	A	Bristol Rovers		
Feb 7	H	Sheffield Wed.		
Feb 14	A	Swansea City (5)		
Feb 21	H	Queens P'k Rangers		
Feb 28	A	Notts County		
Mar 7	H	Grimsby Town (6)		
Mar 14	A	Luton Town (LCF)		
Mar 21	H	Wrexham		
Mar 28	A	Derby County		
Apr 4	H	Orient		
Apr 11	A	Blackburn R. (SF)		
Apr 18	H	Chelsea		
Apr 20	A	Cardiff City		
Apr 25	H	Shrewsbury Town		
May 2	A	Oldham Athletic		

RESERVE FIXTURES 1980-81

Date	V	Opposition	F A
Aug 16	H	Swindon Town	3 - 1
Aug 20	A	Cardiff City	1 - 0
Aug 23	A	Oxford United	1 - 3
Aug 27	H	Southampton	3 - 3
Sept 1	A	Leicester City	0 - 1
Sept 9	H	Queens Park R.	2 - 3
Sept 20	A	Bristol Rovers	1 - 2
Sept 27	A	Tottenham	1 - 4
Oct 4	H	Hereford United	4 - 1
Oct 7	A	Arsenal	0 - 2
Oct 11	A	Orient	2 - 0
Oct 18	H	Fulham	1 - 0
Oct 21	H	Reading	1 - 1
Oct 25	A	Ipswich Town	0 - 2
Nov 1	H	Crystal Palace	0 - 4
Nov 4	H	Cardiff City	0 - 1
Nov 7	A	Luton Town	2 - 0
Nov 15	A	Swindon Town	1 - 0
Nov 22	H	Chelsea	1 - 1
Nov 29	A	Norwich City	0 - 1
Dec 6	H	West Ham Utd.	2 - 1
Dec 9	H	Birmingham City	
Dec 10	A	Reading	
Dec 20	H	Arsenal	
Dec 26	A	Plymouth Argyle	
Jan 10	A	Chelsea	
Jan 17	A	Southampton	
Jan 31	H	Oxford United	
Feb 7	A	Queens Park R.	
Feb 14	H	Leicester City	
Feb 17	H	Tottenham	
Feb 28	H	Bristol Rovers	
Mar 7	A	Hereford United	
Mar 14	H	Orient	
Mar 21	A	Fulham	
Mar 28	H	Ipswich Town	
Apr 4	A	Crystal Palace	
Apr 7	H	Plymouth Argyle	
Apr 11	H	Luton Town	
Apr 18	A	Birmingham City	
Apr 25	A	West Ham United	
May 2	H	Norwich City	

**ALL FIRST TEAM
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MEET THE STAFF

GERRY SHARPE

I could do with one of those large bags of hats which comedian Tommy Cooper carries around with him now that I have taken over the many duties attached to my new post as youth manager.

The job is a combination of coaching and administration work and at various times during the week I perform the duties of manager, scout, public relations officer, secretary and coach. I am responsible for all players from apprentices downwards.

It has taken me a little while to get myself organised but things are beginning to fall into a pattern. A typical week might go something like this:

Monday — This is set aside for office work, which will include answering letters from schoolboys asking for trials, contacting parents and team officials for background information about them, and deciding whether they are promising enough to be offered a trial or a game in our Midland Youth League team. It might also include arranging matches or tours and finalising any midweek teams.

Tuesday — Coaching sessions in the morning and afternoon. I usually take the apprentices and young professionals while Mike Kelly puts the reserves through their paces. Sometimes Mike gets involved with the first team and I take both the apprentices and reserves.

Wednesday — The morning might be spent in the office or if there is not much to do I will organise another coaching session. Our Midland Youth League side play in the afternoon and I always go with them. Before this, at lunchtime, I often get players such as Garry Smith or Alan Nicholls come and ask for a bit of extra individual coaching.

Thursday — Another full day of coaching with two sessions for the apprentices and young professionals.

Friday — Yet more coaching in the morning and an afternoon in the office making sure that each of the intermediate team has been contacted and knows the arrangements for the following day's match.

Saturdays — I go with the intermediate team and if they have no match I get to another game and prepare reports on players.



Sundays — Most of the local junior football is played and I try and get to games in the morning and afternoon to watch lads, who have been recommended to me.

Most evenings during the week I am busy either coaching or going to watch games, which include some League matches, if the manager wants a report on a certain player. The only evening I hold sacred is Sunday when I make a point of reminding my family that I still exist.

The job is a tremendous responsibility because, in a sense, the future of the club is in my hands. But, although it means a seven-day week plus many evenings out working, the rewards are tremendous.

Seeing young players develop their skills and work their way towards the first team squad is worth a great deal. But it also provides constant frustration because the one thing youngsters nearly always lack is consistency. Just when you think you have discovered a world-beater he more often than not loses his form completely and you are left with the job of restoring his confidence.

I could well understand the frustrations of being a manager when I had to watch our recent FA Youth Cup tie at Portsmouth. We were beaten 4-1 but should have won hands down considering the number of clear chances we had. It was no good getting annoyed with the team because they played very well apart from losing their heads in front of goal. All the coaching counted for nothing in the split second involved in shooting and I could do nothing about it sat on the bench.

I believe one of the most important tasks of a youth manager is to help the youngsters live with their disappointments and understand that football is a hard game. Consistency comes with maturity and it is my job to ensure that the talented young players we have at Ashton Gate get the best possible guidance to help them grow on and off the field.

Two's Company

A ROUND UP OF DIVISION TWO NEWS AND PERSONALITIES

● One time leaders of Division Two, Blackburn Rovers have just ended a spell of six games without a win. They had their first success since mid-October when they beat bottom of the table Bristol Rovers 2-0 at Ewood Park.

Player-manager Howard Kendall has been on the lookout for new players — particularly in attack.

But the former Everton and Birmingham City midfielder man would not pay West Bromwich Albion's asking price of £50,000 for Kevin Summerfield.

● Swansea City ended a run of four games without a goal when they beat Preston North End 3-0 at home. Former Everton player Neil Robinson scored twice and leading goal-getter Alan Waddle netted his seventh of the season.

● Former Manchester City manager Tony Book has joined the Cardiff City coaching staff at Ninian Park.

Assistant manager Brian Harris and coach Doug Livermore have now left Cardiff — Livermore to join the Norwich City coaching staff.

● Orient's Peter Taylor, recently signed from Tottenham Hotspur for £200,000, scored on his debut against Bristol Rovers and also netted in the 1-1 home draw with Newcastle United.

● Glenn Roeder of Queens Park Rangers scored his first goal of the season in the game at Preston which North End won 3-2. Last season Roeder was Rangers third highest scorer with nine goals behind Clive Allen (28) and Paul Goddard (16).

● Grimsby Town's Joe Waters netted in about ten seconds against Cambridge United and set the club off on their best win since being promoted at the end of last season.

They finished up 3-1 victors, only the second time this season they have netted more than once in a game. One of their goals came from former Bristol City player Mike Brolly — his first of the season.

Before this win Grimsby had scored only nine goals in 18 League games.

Grimsby went one better a few day's later winning 4-2 at Preston.

● Paul Giles of Cardiff City made his League debut in the club's 3-2 win at Blackburn Rovers. Giles, who has been a full time professional since June 1979, retained his place after Cardiff's second away win of the season.

● The McCullochs have been among the goals fairly consistently in the Second Division this season. Andy of Sheffield Wednesday notched his ninth of the season in the 1-0 home win over Watford. That took his career total to 112 scored with Queens Park Rangers, Cardiff City, Oxford United and Brentford as well as Wednesday.

● His namesake Ian has scored six times for Notts County in the present campaign. That makes 20 since he was signed from Kilmar-nock for £80,000 in April 1978.

● Chelsea's Clive Walker scored his 10th League goal of the season in the 2-0 home win over Sheffield Wednesday. Former City apprentice Colin Lee scored in the same match to take his total to 14.

● Brian Kidd, leading scorer for today's visitors Bolton Wanderers notched his 10th of the season in the 3-0 win over Notts County. That left him needing three to take his career total to 150.

● Chris Woods of Queens Park Rangers and his former team mate Paul Goddard, now with West Ham United, were in the England Under-21 side which beat Switzerland 5-0 in a European Championship match at Ipswich. Goddard scored one of the goals.

Trevor Brooking of West Ham United won his 41st England cap in the 2-1 World Cup win over Switzerland at Wembley.

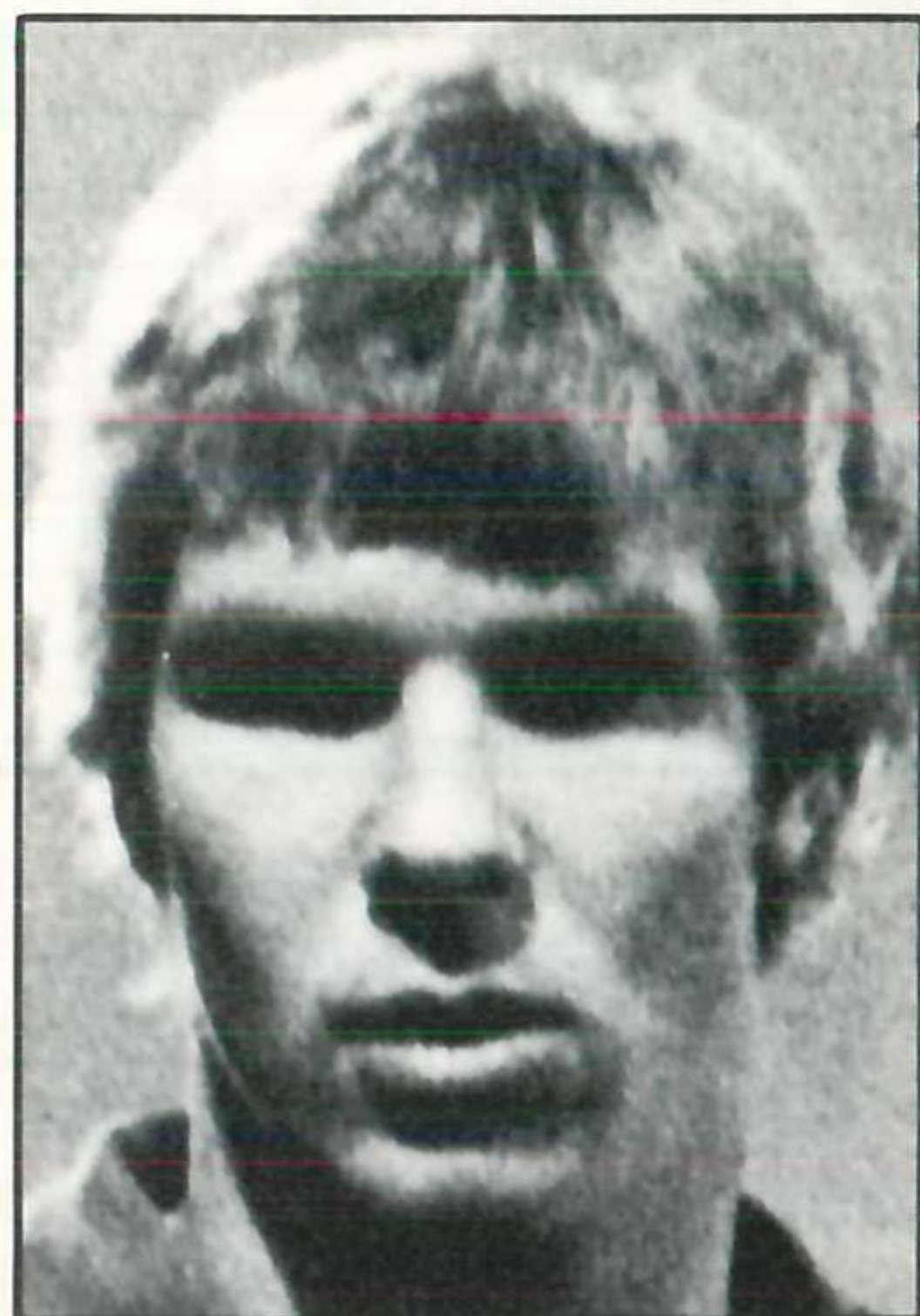
● Paul Clayton of Derby County made his first appearance of the season in the 3-0 home defeat by Cambridge United. Clayton's only other League outing was in October 1978 against Tottenham Hotspur when he was still an apprentice.



HOWARD KENDALL



JOE WATERS



CHRIS WOODS

MOBILITY Car & Van Hire

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IAN DOYLE	Mr. Swanton's Barber Shop. Tel: 36157				
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GEOFF MERRICK	Bob and Chris Martells Nite Spot, Anchor Road, Bristol				
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TOM RITCHIE	Vale Stores of Clifton, 3 St. Johns Road, Clifton, Bristol				
DAVID ROGERS	A. Whitty & Co. Ltd., Cox's Green, Wrington, Avon. Tel: Wrington 862404				
JOHN SHAW	Bristol & West Motor Auctions Ltd., Midland Road, Old Market, Bristol				
PAUL STEVENS		Graham Ford — Portishead			
GERRY SWEENEY	Leslie J. Kew, Building Contractors, Avonea Yate, Chipping Sodbury. Tel: 310158				
TREVOR TANTON	Chew Valley Eggs Ltd., (Prop. Peter West) Chew Valley Eggs Ltd.				
CLIVE WHITEHEAD	Axbridge Mushrooms Ltd.		Axbridge Mushrooms Ltd.		Axbridge Mushrooms Ltd.
HOWARD PRITCHARD	Vale News, 3 St. Johns Road, Clifton				
JULIAN MARSHALL	Roland J. Bell, Electrical Contractors		Roland J. Bell, Electrical Contractors		
KEVIN BADDELEY	Melanie Tanner Frampton Cotterel	Don Porter Rosemere Gardens, Uplands			

Any supporters wishing to sponsor the remaining Players should contact Jim Evans — 663886.

PRESS GANG

PETER OAKES

Let's make one thing clear.

I don't think there's a soul who regularly sits in the Ashton Gate press box who wants to see Bristol City in the Third Division.

Or their cross-city neighbours Bristol Rovers for that matter.

And that might come as something of a surprise to those of you who believe that sports reporters feed on the gloom and despondency that surrounds a club fighting to save its face.

Okay, so we write about the desperate survival battle and talk about this or that crisis.

But at the end of the day we are all inwardly hoping that things work out right and the club stays up to fight another day.

Those of us who work for national newspapers know that our own status depends on the status of the clubs we cover.

I've got a fairly widespread brief from my own paper the Daily Star — an area that takes in Second Division clubs Swansea, Cardiff, Bristol City, Bristol Rovers and Third Division centres like Portsmouth, Plymouth, Exeter, Newport and Swindon.

But it is as important to me as it is to Bob Houghton, Stephen Kew and everyone else at Ashton Gate that the club wins its battle against the drop.

Just as it is important that Terry Cooper succeeds at Eastville — and John Trollope at Swindon.

Because if one, two or three of those clubs do go down then the West Country and Wales trails even further behind other soccer regions like Merseyside, Manchester, the North East, the Midlands, East Anglia and London.

And the fewer top class clubs in the region then the more difficult the job becomes until the day arrives when it is decided that the West Country and Wales no longer needs a sports reporter based in that area.

There have already been signs that the horns have been withdrawn. Today only the Daily Star, the Daily Mirror, the Daily Mail and the Daily Telegraph have their own men covering the West.

It's not so long ago that the Daily Express were in the same position — but their regional man was moved to London — and who can say that won't happen to others if the slump in achievements continues?



PETER OAKES
DAILY STAR

So far this season we have been fortunate in our coverage of the area's affairs.

There's been plenty of off-diary happenings. You can recall most of the headline-making excitement yourself.

Alan Dicks' dismissal here; Bob Houghton's subsequent appointment; Bob Smith's demise at Swindon and the eventual succession of John Trollope; the fire that destroyed Bristol Rovers' stand; Terry Coopers battle for results . . .

To some extent we are fortunate in Bristol that the two clubs have well-known managers.

Terry Cooper's past pedigree as a player makes him a man whose word is of interest to newspaper readers further afield than Avon and Somerset.

Equally Bob Houghton's exploits with Malmö made him something of a household name in British soccer — and his views, too, are widely sought, read and respected.

So in some ways Bristol City's demise last season when they slipped out of the First Division hasn't affected the space the club gets in the national press.

But if they should slide straight down into the Third then those stories and column inches will become harder and harder to find . . . and life will become that little bit less enjoyable for those of us who rely on the exploits of the region's soccer clubs for our living.

So should you ever be tempted to think that your favourite paper's soccer reporter seems to be revelling and enjoying your club's current plight — think again!

JIM'S PAGE

As we start the second half of the season today it is more important than ever that you give manager Bob Houghton and the players all the encouragement you can.

The club are not enjoying the best of spells but it is at these times support is needed more than ever. Bob has been delighted with the support he has received so far so let's have a big Ashton Roar again today to help the lads win two valuable points.



Bolton are in a similar position to ourselves, having been relegated last season. We played well and gained a point at Burnden Park earlier in the season and had enough of the play and the chances to have won.

The picture in this page is of Adrian Fisher, a handicapped youngster who is a true Bristol City supporter.

He lives at Wells and is brought up to see every home game by Connie Newton, one of our stalwart agents.

Adrian is a City fanatic and knows all about the club. It gives him a great tonic every time we win.

The club gave him an early Christmas present — a City shirt and Christmas card autographed by all at Ashton Gate.

CHRISTMAS SHOW

Fred Wedlock's Christmas Spectacular in the Dolman Nite Spot on December 23rd looks like being a sell-out. There is only room for 240 supporters and the few remaining tickets are now available from the Promotions Office at £2 each.

Fred will be supported by Mechanical Horse Trough — a marvellous act — and there will be guest appearances by several players in a specially-scripted pantomime which is part of a fantastic night.

Don't be disappointed — book tickets today. It's going to be a riotous evening, I can promise you that.

SPONSORSHIP

Today's match is being sponsored by Mobility, the competitive car-hire company based on the ground at Ashton Gate. This is their second sponsorship of the season and they have another one lined up before the end of the season.

They have really given us tremendous support this season and those of us driving Mobility cars can vouch for their comfort, reliability and value.

Don't miss their grand parade of vehicles around the ground at half time.

Sponsorship has gone extremely well this season and only two of our remaining League games this season are yet without a sponsor. They are those against Cardiff City on Boxing Day and Orient on April 4th.

The Cardiff match is sure to attract one of our best crowds of the season for it is a traditional local derby. Anyone seeking details of how to sponsor either game, please contact me on Bristol 66-3886. We are certain you will be happy with the package we can provide to promote your company.

AGENTS' PARTY

This takes place at the Mecca Locarno Ballroom on Tuesday next, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. There will be dancing to the Christy Lee Big Band and the swinging supporting group KAOS.

Most agents will have received their tickets by now but if any have not arrived please let me know immediately and I will arrange for them to be left at the door.

If any supporters want to join us for a happy pre-Christmas celebration when officials, players and staff will be attending, there are still some available from the Promotions Office at £2 each.

JIM EVANS
*Commercial
Manager*



Stop Press!

TRAVELLERS CLUB — BRISTOL

The next trip is to NEWCASTLE on 20th December. In view of the distance we are hoping to arrange an executive coach for the comfort of our regulars.

The fare for this trip will be £12. As the seats will be limited, please book early.

The coach will be at the gate at 6.00 a.m.

PROGRAMME SPECIAL . . .

Just arrived in the Club Shop are copies of the Bell's League Cup Final programme between Dundee and Dundee United. Forty-eight pages packed with colour, price 50p. A must for every programme collector. Don't miss out on your copy, pop in the shop today to avoid disappointment.

SCOREBOARD . . .

- A Aston Villa v Birmingham
- B Coventry v W.B.A.
- C Crystal Palace v Norwich City
- D Everton v Brighton
- E Ipswich v Liverpool
- F Leeds United v Nott'm Forest
- G Leicester City v Middlesbrough
- H Manchester Utd v Stoke City
- J Sunderland v Arsenal
- K Tottenham v Manchester City
- L Wolves v Southampton
- M Blackburn v West Ham United
- N Derby County v Watford
- P Grimsby Town v Chelsea
- R Luton Town v Preston
- S Notts County v Oldham
- T Orient v Shrewsbury
- U Q.P.R. v Cardiff City

MATCH BALL

Today's match ball has been kindly donated by:

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TEAMS

BRISTOL CITY

- | | |
|----|------------------|
| 1 | RAY CASHLEY |
| 2 | GERRY SWEENEY |
| 3 | ALAN HAY |
| 4 | JIMMY MANN |
| 5 | JULIAN MARSHALL |
| 6 | CLIVE WHITEHEAD |
| 7 | TREVOR TAINTON |
| 8 | TONY FITZPATRICK |
| 9 | CHRIS GARLAND |
| 10 | TOM RITCHIE |
| 11 | HOWARD PRITCHARD |
| 12 | |

BOLTON WANDERERS

- | | |
|----|------------------|
| 1 | TERRY POOLE |
| 2 | MIKE GRAHAM |
| 3 | GERRY McELHINNEY |
| 4 | PHIL WILSON |
| 5 | PAUL JONES |
| 6 | MIKE WALSH |
| 7 | PETER NICOLSON |
| 8 | NEIL WHATMORE |
| 9 | DAVID HOGGAN |
| 10 | BRIAN KIDD |
| 11 | ALAN GOWLING |
| 12 | |

TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS:

Referee: D. HUTCHINSON, Harrowgate
Linesmen: D. DELANEY (Red Flag)
J. GRANGER (Yellow Flag)